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How Russia Could Use Your Aunt's Genealogical Hobby to Kill You

Your aunt's genealogy hobby could help China or Russia design a bio-weapon to kill your family.

This risk worries policymakers and officials in the United States, even though it is a distant prospect for most people. The emergence of such technology could allow rogue regimes to develop exquisite assassination programs with more than the usual impunity.

"There are now weapons being developed, and being developed, that are designed to target specific people," Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO), a member of the committees that oversee the Pentagon and the intelligence community, said Friday. American. Security Forum in Aspen, Colorado. "That's what it is, where you can actually take someone's DNA, you know, their medical profile, and you can target a bioweapon that will kill that person or take them off the battlefield or render unusable."

More sophisticated US rivals could use such methods to open a new front against the US population, another top lawmaker added, by targeting large-scale food supplies.

RUSSIA AND UKRAINE SIGN CEREAL EXPORT AGREEMENT THAT COULD AVOID GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

"If we look at food security and what can our adversaries do with biological weapons that are directed against our animal agriculture, against our agricultural sector...highly pathogenic avian influenza, African swine fever," said Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA), member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "All of these things have been circulating around the world, but if targeted by an adversary, we know it leads to food insecurity. Food insecurity leads to many other insecurities around the world.

Lawmakers outlined those risks to elaborate on a warning issued more obliquely by Army Gen. Richard Clarke, the commander of U.S. Special Operations Command

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US Special Operations Command.

“Russia is ready to use them against political opponents. They are prepared to use them on their own soil but then to enter the soil of a NATO ally in the UK and use them ... and as we move forward into the future we must be prepared for these eventualities. And I don't think we talk about it as much as we should and look for ways to keep fighting.

It was a reference to Russia's use of a nerve agent in the attempted assassination of former double agent Sergei Skripal, who was found unconscious with his niece on a bench in southeastern Russia. 'England. British officials said they had been poisoned with an “extremely sophisticated” chemical weapon. The Skripals survived the attack, but a British woman named Dawn Sturgess died after being unwittingly exposed to the poison, which had been disguised in a discarded perfume bottle.

Concern over US vulnerability to advanced chemical or biological weapons has intensified within the US intelligence community in recent years, while other domestic policy agencies have shown less awareness of the potential threat. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) has criticized the Department of Health and Human Services since 2019 for jeopardizing “the genomic data of American citizens” by partnering with a laboratory testing company linked to the regime Chinese communist. An HHS watchdog confirmed last year that the public health bureaucracy failed to consider these exotic national security risks when establishing and operating their programs.

For Crow, the most salient risk comes from the cavalier attitude with which private citizens share their personal information, including their DNA.

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“People will very quickly spit in a cup and send it to 23andMe and get some really cool data about their background – and guess what? Their DNA is now privately owned,” he said. “So we need to have an open and public discussion ... about what does protecting health information, DNA information and your data

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look like? Because that data is actually going to be obtained and collected by our adversaries for the development of those systems.

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